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Recommended Citation

University of Montana–Missoula. Office of University Relations, "UM Pre-Law and School of Law" (1984).
University of Montana News Releases, 1928, 1956-present. 8897.
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MEDIA RELEASE

law/vsl

8/20/84

Missoulain Back-to-School Edition

UM PRE-LAW PROGRAM AND SCHOOL OF LAW

By Cary E. Holmquist
UM News and Publications

The best preparation for the study of law is a liberal education that allows a student to develop a historical understanding of the social, political, economic, and cultural forces that have shaped the laws.

At the University of Montana, undergraduate students can benefit from the Pre-Law Program which provides guidance in planning a course of study which will both culminate in a bachelor's degree and provide the best preparation for law school.

Established in 1911, the UM School of Law is the only accredited law school in Montana.

The UM School of Law has spent the last four years reviewing its entire academic program and restructuring its first-year curriculum. A faculty committee is currently designing a more integrated approach to the second-curriculum.

The program of legal education now provides instruction in four major areas: (1) a knowledge of legal rules and procedures; (2) the ability to apply those rules and procedures to concrete situations; (3) an understanding of the role of law in society and of the lawyer as the embodiment of that role; and (4) the personal qualities as well as the interpersonal skills needed to work effectively with others. These innovations are in the forefront of legal education in America.

During the three-year law program students are trained in legal reasoning, research, and writing; client counseling; negotiation; and fields of law needed for general practice. They also have an opportunity to take specialized courses.

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law--add one

The law school operates an extensive clinical program which allows students to see firsthand and participate in what they study in classrooms. Under the supervision of faculty members and practicing attorneys, students research actual cases, meet and advise clients, write briefs.

Students also learn to prepare and present cases before courts, at both the trial and appellate level. Several recent UM moot court teams have placed in the National Moot Court competition in appellate advocacy held in New York City, and the 1981 UM team won the national event.

John O. Mudd is the dean of the school.

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